

Ryan Maughan - protect water quality for all

9/13/07 Workshop
Irrigated Lands Program
Deadline: 9/4/07 Noon

From: "Miranda Leonard" <mclionheart@gmail.com>
To: <rmaughan@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: 8/29/2007 2:41 PM
Subject: protect water quality for all



29 August, 2007

Ryan Maughan, Division of Water Quality
State Water Resources Control Board
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Re: Comment Letter - September 13, 2007 Irrigated Lands Program Joint Workshop."

Dear State and Regional Water Board Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comments on the Central Valley's Conditional Waiver program for Irrigated Agriculture. I call on you to act now to protect and restore the quality of our region's water from this major source of pollution.

Irrigation water run-off from fields contain a toxic mix of fertilizers and pesticides, which ultimately flow into our waterways and seep into our aquifers. As a result, our local drinking water sources are the worst polluted in the State. More than 40,000 people in Central Valley communities each year are exposed to unsafe and illegal levels of contaminants in their drinking water due to groundwater contamination. Today over 20 percent of all community systems in Tulare County cannot meet basic safe drinking water laws, almost entirely due to nitrate contamination of groundwater sources.

Currently the Central Valley Regional Water Board continues to allow water with highly concentrated levels of fertilizers and pesticides to contaminate community drinking water sources without ANY regulatory requirements.

While irrigators are given a green light to pollute, small, rural communities have to pay for bottled water and the cost for drilling new wells or treatment technology. Because these sources of contaminants have remained unregulated, residents in the Central Valley have to pay some of the highest proportional water rates in the state for undrinkable water.

Lack of groundwater protections has gone on too long at the expense of community health. I strongly urge you to act today to stop waiving regulatory requirements and issue permits to irrigated agriculture that are truly protective of our drinking water sources and other beneficial uses.

Sincerely,

Miranda Leonard